

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 08266 011032Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 766

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 8266

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MPOS, LE

SUBJECT: ALLEGED SYRIAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN TYRE

REF: STATE 292137

1. WE ASSUME FAHMY REFERRING TO POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF
SAIQA CONTINGENTS IN TYRE AND NABATIYAH RATHER THAN
TO REGULAR SYRIAN ARMY ELEMENTS FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) FAHMY'S ONLY MEETING WITH ASAD, ACCORDING OUR
INFORMATION, WAS EVENING NOVEMBER 24. BEFORE AND SINCE
THAT DATE, THERE NO INDICATION, OF WHICH WE AWARE,
THAT SARKIS HAS DIRECTED ASF DEPLOYMENT FURTHER SOUTH
THAN ZAHARANI, WHERE ASF ARRIVED NOVEMBER 21.

(B) SYRIAN POSTURE, MOST RECENTLY REITERATED BY
ASAD TO JOSEPH KRAFT NOVEMBER 29, IS THAT ITS FORCES
WILL GO WHEREEVER, AND BY CLEAR IMPLICATION ONLY WHERE,
SARKIS DIRECTS.

(C) ISRAELI RADION HAS MAINTAINED REPEATEDLY OVER
PAST WEEK THAT SYRIANS HAVE MADE NO DEPLOYMENT FURTHER
TO SOUTH TAH POSITIONS REACHED NOVEMBER 21.

2. WE HAD CONSIDERED SUGGESTING THAT IN LIGHT OF SARKIS'
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DIFFICULTIES WITH UTILIZING LEBANESE ARMY IN SOUTH, HE

MIGHT FIND WAY TO USE SAIQA AS POLICE FORCE OVER PALESTINIANS.
HOWEVER, PREDICTABLE DRAWBACK TO THIS IS FACT THAT SAIQA
TOO SMALL AND TOO LIGHTLY ARMED TO CONTROL ITS
PALESTINAIN OPPONENTS IN THAT AREAS. (SYRIANS , OF COURSE,
HAVE IN PAST STRENGTHENED SAIQA BY SLIPPING IN REGULAR
SYRIAN FORCES IN SAIQA DISGUISE.)
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic DecapTIONing: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, TROOP DEPLOYMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 DEC 1976
DecapTION Date: 28 MAY 2004
DecapTION Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC08266
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760444-0987
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761284/aaaacutm.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 292137
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <04 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED SYRIAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN TYRE
TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006